

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO WHITE HOUSE FLASH

UNCLAS STATE 007445

TOSEC 43

WHITE HOUSE PLS PASS SAM 86970

FOLLOWING SENT ACTION JERUSALEM, INFO TEL AVIV, JAN 13,
FROM SECSTATE RPTD TO YOU:

QUOTE UNCLAS STATE 007445

TOSEC 43

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OVIP (KISSINGER)

SUBJECT: PRESS MATERIAL

CHICAGO TRIBUNE, SUNDAY - JANUARY 13TH ISSUE, CITY EDITION.
FRONT PAGE LARGE TWO LINE HEADLINE THAT SAYS "NIXON SOUGHT
TO FIRE ADMIRAL IN SPY CASE". SECOND HEAD IS "SECRET LEAKS
TO MOORER". THE STORY CARRIES A CHICAGO TRIBUNE PRESS
SERVICE COPYRIGHT AND WAS WRITTEN BY JOHN MARGOLIS AND JIM
SQUIRES. THE STORY FOLLOWS:

WASHINGTON DATELINE - AN ANGRY PRESIDENT NIXON WANTED
TO FIRE ADMIRAL THOMAS MOORER, CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS
OF STAFF IN 1971 AFTER WHITE HOUSE SPIES TOLD HIM THAT
MILITARY SPIES WERE SPYING ON HENRY KISSINGER. KISSINGER,
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NOW UNITED STATES SECRETARY OF STATE, WAS NIXON'S
NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISOR IN 1971. THIS ACCOUNT, OBTAINED
INDEPENDENTLY FROM TWO SEPARATE SOURCES, APPEARS TO
SUBSTANTIATE REPORTS FROM OTHER SOURCES THAT THE "WHITE

HOUSE PLUMBERS" HAD PRODUCED EVIDENCE INDICATING UNAUTHORIZED INFORMATION WAS PASSED TO MOORER AND OTHER MILITARY OFFICIALS. IT IS NOT KNOWN WHAT CHANGED PRESIDENT NIXON'S MIND BUT THE ANSWER APPEARED TO LIE IN FACTS SURROUNDING THE INVESTIGATION STILL BEING KEPT SECRET BY THE WHITE HOUSE AS A NATIONAL SECURITY MATTER. ALTHOUGH, IT WOULD NOT DENY THE REPORTS OF A MILITARY SPYING AND EAVESDROPPING

OPERATION WITHIN THE NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL, THE WHITE HOUSE SUGGESTED FRIDAY THAT A NAVY ENLISTED MAN IDENTIFIED AS YEOMAN FIRST CLASS CHARLES RADFORD WAS SOLELY RESPONSIBLE FOR DELIBERATE LEAKS OF CLASSIFIED INFORMATION. RADFORD, NOW IN AN OREGON NAVAL RESERVE UNIT, COULD NOT BE REACHED FOR COMMENT. ACCORDING TO ACCOUNTS OF THE MILITARY SPYING OPERATION SUPPLIED THE TRIBUNE, SOME OF THE INFORMATION OBTAINED BY MILITARY SPIES LATER LEAKED OUT TO THE PRESS. IT WAS TO FIND THE SOURCES OF THESE LEAKS THAT NIXON ESTABLISHED THE "PLUMBERS UNIT" IN 1971. THE WHITE HOUSE'S EXPLANATION ABOUT THE ENLISTED MAN ALSO DOES NOT EXPLAIN WHY MOORER'S REPRESENTATIVE TO KISSINGER'S STAFF, REAR ADMIRAL ROBERT O. WELANDER, ABRUPTLY LEFT THE NATIONAL SECURITY OFFICE EARLY IN 1972. WELANDER WAS REASSIGNED TO A SERIES OF FLOTILLA COMMANDS IN THE WASHINGTON AREA. DESPITE APPARENT INCONSISTENCIES, HIGH LEVEL WHITE HOUSE AIDES WERE OFFERING NO EXPLANATION TODAY. SENIOR WHITE HOUSE OFFICIALS CONTEND THAT PROVIDING DETAILS WOULD RISK NATIONAL SECURITY. "IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO EXPLAIN THIS TO YOU" SAID ONE TOP OFFICIAL, "BECAUSE EVEN THE EXPLANATION IS CLASSIFIED". BUT ATTEMPTS TO PUSH ASIDE THE CLOAK OF NATIONAL SECURITY ARE BEING MADE BY BOTH THE SENATE WATERGATE COMMITTEE AND THE SPECIAL PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE. THE MINORITY STAFF OF THE SENATE WATERGATE COMMITTEE IS KNOWN TO BE INVESTIGATING WHETHER NAVY MEN, OTHER THAN ONE ENLISTED MAN, WERE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE NATIONAL SECURITY LEAKS. SENATOR HOWARD BAKER, REPUBLICAN FROM TENNESSEE, THE COMMITTEE'S VICE CHAIRMAN HAS TWICE ASKED THE WHITE HOUSE TO RELEASE HIM OF HIS UNCLASSIFIED

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PLEDGE NOT TO DISCUSS THE MATTER WHITE HOUSE SOURCES SAID. BAKER WAS DESCRIBED AS DOUBTING THAT GENUINE NATIONAL SECURITY ISSUES WERE AT STAKE. SINCE THE ADMINISTRATION REFUSES TO PRESENT ITS OWN CASE IT IS DIFFICULT TO GIVE ITS SIDE OF THE STORY SUPPORTING THE ARGUMENT THAT REAL NATIONAL SECURITY MATTERS ARE INVOLVED. BUT FROM WHAT HAS BEEN SAID IN THE PAST, AND FROM APPARENT HINTS OF RECENT STATEMENTS, IT SEEMS THAT THE FOLLOWING MATTERS HAVE CONCERNED THE WHITE HOUSE. FIRST, A LEAK TO A NEW YORK REPORT IN 1971 WHICH THE CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY CLAIMS ENDANGERED AN INDIAN NATIONAL WHO WAS FEEDING INFORMATION ABOUT THE SOVIET UNION TO THE U.S. ON OTHERS, LEAKS ABOUT THE U.S. PLANS FOR THE SALT

DISARMAMENT TALKS IN 1971 AND ABOUT NIXON'S ORDERS TO "TILT" TOWARD PAKISTAN IN ITS WAR WITH INDIA LATER THAT YEAR. IT IS THAT INFORMATION WHICH WAS AVAILABLE IN KISSINGER'S OFFICE AND WHICH WHITE HOUSE OFFICIALS SAY THE NAVY ENLISTED MAN GAVE OR SOLD TO NEWSMEN. ANOTHER FEAR

WAS THAT IT WOULD BECOME KNOWN THAT THE U.S. LEARNED THAT A COPY OF THE PENTAGON PAPERS WAS DELIVERED TO THE SOVIET EMBASSY HERE THROUGH A RUSSIAN INTELLIGENCE AGENT ACTING AS A DOUBLE AGENT FOR THE U.S. AT THE TIME, IN 1971, ADMINISTRATION OFFICIALS APPARENTLY FEARED ALL THE LEAKS MIGHT BE COMING FROM ONE SOURCE OR RELATED SOURCES. SEVERAL PERSONS SAID THAT JOHN MITCHELL, THEN THE ATTORNEY GENERAL, WAS CONVINCED THAT IT WAS A CENTRALIZED CONSPIRACY GOING ON AND SO INFORMED THE PRESIDENT. BY THE ADMINISTRATION'S OWN ACCOUNTS THERE WAS NO SUCH CONSPIRACY. THERE IS ALSO SOME DOUBT AS TO HOW RELIABLE THAT RUSSIAN AGENT WAS AND HOW SECRET THE INDIAN AGENT IS. TOP ADMINISTRATION OFFICIALS ARE ALSO CONTENDING THAT ANY ELABORATION ON THE VARIOUS PARTS WOULD REVEAL TO FOREIGN POWERS THE ORGANIZATIONAL SET UP OF THE U.S. INTELLIGENCE AGENCY. ONE GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL FOR EXAMPLE, ALSO SUGGESTED THAT DETAILING INTERDEPARTMENTAL SPLITS BETWEEN CIVILIAN AND MILITARY OFFICIALS PUTS THE COUNTRY AT A DISADVANTAGE AND IS A LEGITIMATE NATIONAL SECURITY DANGER. BUT BY CONCEDED THAT THERE IS SUCH A BASIC RISK, THE OFFICIALS ARE ALMOST CONCEDED THAT THERE WAS MORE TO THE JOINT CHIEFS SPYING INTEREST THAN A LONE UNCLASSIFIED

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ENLISTED MAN. THERE ARE OTHER INCONSISTENCIES WHICH GOVERNMENT INVESTIGATORS ARE LOOKING INTO. ONE FACTOR IS SUSPICION THAT TWO OF THE CELEBRATED LEAKS ABOUT THE PAKISTAN "TILT" AND THE SALT TALKS SERIOUSLY INTERESTED THE MILITARY BRASS. THE JOINT CHIEFS WERE REPORTEDLY UNHAPPY ABOUT THE SALT AGREEMENT AND THE COMING U.S./SOVIET DETENTE AND THE NAVY AT LEAST WAS WORRIED ABOUT SUPPORTING LAND-LOCKED PAKISTAN OVER INDIA WITH ITS LONG COASTLINE ALONG THE INDIAN OCEAN WHERE SO MANY SOVIET WARSHIPS SAIL. SEVERAL SOURCES THAT USE TO WORK AT THE NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL SAID THEY EXPECTED MOORER'S LIAISON AT THEIR OFFICE TO BE KEEPING HIM INFORMED OF KISSINGER'S ACTIONS. THAT'S WHAT A LIAISON MAN IS, ONE SAID A SPY. ON THE OTHER HAND THEY AGREE THAT ADMIRAL WELANDER'S ABRUPT DEPARTURE EARLY IN 1972 WAS UNUSUAL AND MAY HAVE INDICATED THAT SOMEONE WAS EXCEEDING THE BOUNDARIES OF REPEATED LIAISON INTELLIGENCE GATHERING. THOSE BOUNDARIES DO NOT ENCOMPASS COPYING DOCUMENTS OR EAVESDROPPING, THE QUOTED OFFICIALS SAID. ONE FORMER STAFF MEMBER SAID IT WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN DIFFICULT TO STEAL THINGS OUT OF THE NSC OFFICE. HE SAID THAT IN THE

MAIL ROOM WHERE THE COPYING WAS DONE, SECURITY, SO FAR AS COPYING DOCUMENTS, IS PRETTY LAX BECAUSE EVERYONE WAS MORE OR LESS TRUSTED. WELANDER, WHOSE OFFICE WAS REPORTEDLY ACROSS THE HALL FROM THE MAIL ROOM, HAD BEEN SUSPECTED IN THE PAST BY SOME OFFICIALS OF LEAKING THE PRO-PAKISTAN STORY TO COLUMNIST JACK ANDERSON. ANDERSON DENIED IT AT THE TIME. TWO FORMER MEMBERS OF THE NSC STAFF SAID THEY ALSO DOUBTED THAT WELANDER HAD LEAKED THE DOCUMENTS. THEY SAID THEY THOUGHT THE LEAKS CAME FROM HIGHER OFFICIALS OF THE DEFENSE DEPARTMENT BUT CONCEDED THEY HAD NO HARD EVIDENCE. NOW THE WHITE HOUSE IS SUGGESTING IT CAME FROM THE LOWEST RANKING NAVY MAN ON THE NSC STAFF. MOST OF THE FORMER NSC STAFF MEMBERS SAID THAT THEY ALWAYS ASSUMED THAT WHEN GENERAL ALEXANDER HAIG WAS KISSINGER'S TOP AIDE, HE WAS FILTERING INFORMATION BACK TO THE JOINT CHIEFS. HAIG, NOW WHITE HOUSE CHIEF OF STAFF, DENIED TAKING PART IN THE SPY OPERATION. BUT WHEN HE WAS ASKED WHETHER HE ENCOURAGED ANYONE ELSE TO CONVEY INFORMATION BACK TO THE MILITARY BRASS HE

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WAS QUOTED AS SAYING; "NOT INTENTIONALLY, BUT I CANNOT BE RESPONSIBLE FOR OTHERS MISREADING MY POSITION".

(THIS ARTICLE FROM A TAPE RECORDED PHONE CALL WITH A SAFOI REPRESENTATIVE IN CHICAGO.IT MAY VARY SLIGHTLY IN WORD CONTENT FROM PUBLISHED STORY BUT IS ESSENTIALLY CORRECT) (END TEXT). RUSH UNQUOTE. RUSH

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<< END OF DOCUMENT >>

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